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172 goal of the first party) worked along the northern route from Maralbashi to Turfan in the years 1902–1903, 1904–1905, 1905–1907 and 1913–1914. Their collections were shipped back to Berlin, where the greater part of the wall paintings were destroyed by Allied bombing in the recent war. Excellent pictures, however, are available in the seven volumes of Le Coq's *Die Buddhistische Spätantike in Mittel Asien;* in Le Coq's *Chotscho,* and in Grünwedel's *Alt-Kutscha.* Grünwedel's narrative reports on the first and third expeditions, *Bericht über archaeologische Arbeiten* and *Alt-buddhistische Kultstätten,* are also illustrated lavishly with line drawings, plans, and sketches made on the spot by the author.

At first indifferent to these expeditions and their work, the Chinese Government later took note of the great packing cases of art treasures being shipped out of the country. Archaeological operations were thenceforward discouraged and officially hindered in every way. But already by the time of the first World War the known sites had been practically denuded. Easily available ruins had already suffered greatly from the local population who, as good Moslems, felt bound to destroy heathen idols and especially to deface representations of human beings. What the European excavators uncovered but did not remove has largely succumbed to the elements and to the later efforts of treasure seekers.

172 778 Important artistic discoveries were made at about a dozen spots. Starting at the southern edge of the Taklamakan Desert near Khotan — which was the capital of an ancient kingdom — we find the sand-covered ruins of a settlement at Dandan Oilik, and of a great stupa (dome-shaped Buddhist shrine) at Rawak. Farther east, near the place where the Niya River dies in the dunes, lie the indications of another town. A ruined Tibetan fort at Miran, in the neighborhood of Charklik, guards the ruins of a much earlier group of Buddhist shrines. On the northern rim of the desert atop spurs of the foothills of the Tien Shan range stand the temples at Tumshuk, close to Maralbashi, and the great temples at Subashi and Duldur-akhur above the Kucha oasis.

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Also in the environs of Kucha, which is known to have been the center of a large and thriving principality, are the *Ming Oi* (literally "thousand houses") of Kyzyl, Kumtura, and Kiris. Those cave temples are cut out of the solid rock of cliffsides where rivers coming down from the high mountains have cut steep ravines. At Shorchuk, between Korla and Kharashahr, stand the ruins of an ancient walled town with many temples and burial monuments; as at Kucha, the local people refer to the shrines as *Ming Oi*.

The Turfan Depression, with its twin oases of Turfan and Kharakhoja, is particularly rich in artistic remains. Two old towns could be traced here: the more ancient one was in utter ruins but Khocho ("Chotscho"), the capital of the Uighur Kings of Turfan from the ninth through the thirteenth century, had numerous temples, monasteries, and tombs which generously rewarded excavation. In the rocky ravines near Khocho are great clusters of shrines and monastic dwellings both cut out of the cliffs and built on the banks. Most notable are the temples and stupas of the Tuyok Valley and the Sangim Gorge, and the great monastery terrace of Bezeklik (also sometimes called *Ming Oi*).

One further site which should perhaps be included is Khotan itself. Although structural remains of the old capital are limited to doubtful mounds of debris, large quantities of interesting metal and pottery objects of undoubted antiquity have been dug up in the oasis.

With few exceptions the structures of which any traces remain are of a clearly religious character. They can usually be distinguished as shrines, temples, burial monuments, or various parts of monastic establishments. Everywhere but in the Turfan basin, the religion is exclusively Buddhist. A few of the buildings in the old city of Khocho display murals of Nestorian Christian and Manichaean inspiration, and manuscript remains in the area confirm the coexistence in Turfan of these three faiths for several centuries.

Apart from temples cut out of rock, construction is generally of sun-dried bricks, stamped clay, or some sort of mud plaster

172 778 341 strengthened by twigs and beams. As might be expected with such building materials, the architecture is generally simple and undistinguished. A few structures rise twenty or thirty feet; some boast true arches and some have several stories. In general the models followed are Indian and Iranian. The three basic elements of every shrine, whether rock-cut or free-standing, are a square or circular cell, a large statue or symbol of Buddha, and a passage permitting processions to go completely around the Buddha image.

172 778 531 In addition to the central Buddha figure the temples were often decorated lavishly with other sculptured Buddhas, Bodhisattvas (beings destined to attain Buddhahood) goddesses, Lopakalas (guardians of the directions), and so forth. The statues ranged in dimension from slightly over life-size figures in almost full relief to small sitting Buddhas surrounded by aureoles which were used as decorative elements together with floral and leaf motifs. Commonly the figures were made of stucco or mud strengthened with reeds or straw at the core.

They appear to have been cast in molds, often with separate forms for face, hair, ears, arms, legs and other parts; then joined together and attached to the wall. Variations could be introduced in the facial expression in the finishing-off process before the statue was completely dry. Afterwards it was coated with a thin layer of clay or plaster, painted with water colors, and gilded with gold leaf. Although in many cases the pigments have been washed away or destroyed, all figures seem to have been originally touched up in this way. In some temples whole walls were covered with a succession of such statues but sculptural representations of scenes comprising more than one figure are rare.

172 778 532 Even more striking than the statues are the mural paintings. Almost every inner wall and ceiling is completely covered with frescoes. Large dramatic compositions depicting scenes in the life story of the Buddha or the various future Buddhas are framed in decorative bands and flanked, perhaps, by row upon row of seated Buddhas. Overhead vaults are filled in with stylized moun-

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tain landscapes made up of many small segments each of which illustrates a Buddhist legend. Winged Gandharvas (a kind of angel) and celestial musicians may be fitted into triangular spaces above eye level so as to give the impression of floating above the worshiper. Animals real and fabulous, flowers, trees, palaces, war equipment, and pleasures of the hunt are among the many subjects included in the relations of the various myths or the surrounding ornaments. Well-known divinities of classical Greece as well as many-armed Indian gods are to be found adopted into the Buddhist pantheon. Some frescoes consist of assemblages of these divinities. Others depict Buddhist heavens and hells. A frequent sight is that of Buddha preaching to a group of monks. Monks are also pictured together with benefactors — noblemen through whose contributions the holy work of temple decoration has been financed.

The donors are typically represented in the clothing of the locality and the age, as contrasted with the monks and divine figures whose costume is prescribed by the canons of Buddhist art. Even more interesting are the facial and other physical characteristics of these patrons. Here we have an astounding variety of human types — European and Levantine as well as eastern Asiatic. The evidences would point to a succession of alien conquests with each new set of rulers inscribing themselves as patrons of the existing Buddhist monasteries. Since, however, the warriors generally came from peoples of lower material and artistic level, their tastes did not greatly or immediately affect the content and style of the monastic art. The paintings appear to have been made either by monks themselves or by artists working under rather close religious supervision.

All frescoes are in tempera or water color applied directly to the smoothed and plastered wall while the surface was still wet. In each group of shrines the palette is limited to a modest number of colors and tones. The few colors used are employed with considerable effect. Gold leaf is occasionally added. In some instances the drawing appears to have been by means of tracings

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172 778 532 or stencils; more typically the murals were sketched in with a free hand. A distinctive feature is the emphasis on outlines, which are almost invariably darkened and slightly thickened.

In addition to these sculptures and frescoes, there were found several examples of smaller arts. Particularly noteworthy are painted wooden panels which were deposited at the feet of Buddha statues as votive offerings. Some paintings on paper and on fabric appear to have been designed for the same purpose, or for temple banners. The illustrated Manichaean manuscript fragments found in Khocho are amazingly similar to the early medieval Christian book art.

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Among the wooden items are small reliquary caskets and statuettes, as well as carved ceiling beams, brackets, and other structural elements.

Woven or embroidered textiles seem to have been in large part imported into Central Asia from China, Persia, and other areas. Although Khotan was reputedly famous for its rugs, it is impossible to prove that any particular rug fragments are of Khotanese manufacture.

172 531 Among the various ruins the earliest period is represented by the secular dwellings at the Niya site, and by the stupas of Miran. Amid the shifting sands and scrub-covered cones in the desert north of the present village of Niya, Sir Aurel Stein was able to trace remains of a whole community. In addition to the ever-present stupa there were ancient houses, courtyards, cattlesheds, arbors, orchards, trellises, irrigation canals, and even a footbridge over the old river bed. Broken wooden posts rising above the gaunt earth proved to be the original supports of wattle and plaster walls of old residences.

Some houses of substantial size suggested that the occupants were men of position. From the drift-sand filling the floors of the rooms Stein was able to salvage fairly well-preserved wooden beams and brackets fallen from the ceilings, and fragments of furniture such as chair legs. These were carved with animals, rosettes, pots of leaves and other decorative motifs particularly characteristic of the Gandhara school of sculpture which flour-

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The *Ming Oi* of Kyzyl comprise several hundred rock-cut caves ranged along several levels on a series of steep cliffs overlooking the Muzart River. In addition to temples of various sizes there were workrooms, storerooms, and sleeping quarters. The most common type of shrine consisted of a square room with a niche for a sacred image in the center of the wall opposite the door. On either side of the statue, a corridor led back to a transverse passage, permitting the worshiper to make the required complete circle about the image. The ceiling was usually in the form of a barrel vault. A few temples had round cupolas and a few others had stone-cut imitations of the "lantern" roof (composed of a series of squares of diminishing size laid diagonally one above the other and leaving open a small aperture at the very top) still found today in Persia and Kashmir. Each of these cell-like temples was furnished with a small vestibule. Long stone balconies and flights of steps gave access to the temples and connected them with each other. Practically no daylight penetrated to the inside of the cells; the decorations must have been executed and enjoyed only by use of lamps.

Le Coq and Grünwedel were able to uncover wall paintings in some sixty of these caves. The frescoes abound in drama and motion. Buddha, in the scenes from his life and in the familiar teaching, meditating, and other poses, is given a human and gentle aspect. The Bodhisattvas, worshipers, kings, queens, Brahmans, ascetics, monks, dancers, musicians, servants, demons, and other personages who surround the Buddha or play roles in the illustrations of the Buddhist legends display a great variety of complexion, feature, figure, garb, expression, and pose. All appear to be active participants: a courtier turns his head to talk to a neighbor; two Brahmans carry on a lively dispute; a supplicant prostrates himself at Buddha's feet. In one particularly effective panel, a king who is taking a ceremonial bath in a tub of butter receives news of Buddha's demise by means of a painted cloth held up before him by a minister. On the cloth are pictured the four "great events": the birth, enlightenment, first sermon, and

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death of Buddha. Several depictions of the burning of Buddha's corpse are notable for the intensity of sorrow communicated by the mourners.

Although the compositions are intricate and the available space tightly packed with figures and background designs, the main contours stand out clearly. Color schemes are based on muted brown, flesh, and rust tones, accented with bright blue and green.

The donors portrayed in the Kyzyl caves (usually on the wall near the entrance) are at first glance astonishingly like knights and ladies of medieval Europe. Tall, fair-skinned, and red-haired, they wear dresses and armor of the style prevailing in Persia under the Sassanian Dynasty from the third through the seventh centuries. The cloaks and gowns appear to be of fine brocade or richly embroidered material. An unusual hair arrangement in which the top locks are cut to a length of about four inches and allowed to fall loose on either side of a center part is characteristic of both men and women. Frequently a stylized flower, perhaps a development of the classical cornucopia carried by certain figures in the Gandhara sculptures, is held in the hand.

Both the style of the paintings and the decorative motifs employed give evidence of a blending of Indian, Persian and late Hellenistic influences. Many resemblances can be pointed out between these Kyzyl murals and the famed wall paintings of the Ajanta cave temples in Central India, which were executed at roughly the same time. Only rarely, however, do the figures in the Kyzyl pantomimes approach the sinuous grace and delicacy of the best work at Ajanta. Perhaps the closest comparison, outside of the Tarim Basin, is with the frescoes in the caves surrounding the colossal Buddha in the valley of Bamian, near Kabul, in Afghanistan. Chemical analysis has indicated that identical pigments were used. This tie between Kucha and Bamian, which had been a Buddhist center since about 100 A.D., suggests one path along which Buddhist art progressed into Central Asia.

At Kumtura, about nine miles east of Kyzyl along the Muzart River, is another group of cave temples. As at Kyzyl the various temples could be placed approximately as belonging to the fifth,

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sixth, seventh or eighth centuries. Similar architectural styles were followed and similar medieval-looking benefactors were depicted. In subject matter and treatment the paintings are clearly related, but in some of the Kumtura caves is an unmistakable Chinese element, nowhere glimpsed at Kyzyl. The eyes of the Buddhas are just slightly tilted, the landscapes are more freely drawn, and typical T'ang Dynasty cloud forms appear overhead.

Sculptural remains brought from Kyzyl and Kumtura consist mainly of severed heads of goddesses, Bodhisattvas, Brahmans and other personages. The statues were sometimes grouped on balconies, sometimes arranged in separate niches along the walls. The heritage of the Graeco-Buddhist traditions of Gandhara is amply demonstrated in facial features, hair treatment, head ornaments, and, where full figures are shown, in the drapery.

Contemporary with the Kyzyl and Kumtura caves but quite different in style are the group of shrines belonging to an old monastery at Dandan Oilik (in the words of local treasure seekers, "the place of houses with ivory") in the desert near Khotan. Each shrine originally consisted of a square inner cell enclosing a large Buddha statue on a pedestal. This cell was surrounded by a square perambulatory. Both inner and outer walls were decorated with paintings — for the most part of large Buddhas or saints in a checkerboard pattern. On the whole these figures are stiff and rather indifferently drawn. A few representations of legendary scenes include one particularly graceful water nymph of decidedly Indian inspiration. The donors, pictured as tiny figures kneeling at the feet of the large Buddhas, are markedly Chinese or Mongol in appearance.

Decorative stucco reliefs of small Buddhas, saints, and flying Gandharvas, and remains of larger statues, followed the Graeco-Buddhist pattern but achieved no particular distinction. Perhaps the most interesting art finds of the Dandan Oilik site are the considerable number of rectangular wooden panels each about a foot long. They were apparently intended as gifts to the shrine from secular patrons. On these tablets appear sure-handed and

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spirited sketches of Buddhist divinities and legends, some in full color. A particularly attractive drawing shows Rustan, the great Persian hero, as a handsome four-armed Bodhisattva.

Dandan Oilik, by all indications, was abandoned gradually, because of increasing difficulty of irrigation, around the end of the eighth century.

The art of the ancient city at Shorchuk near the Kharashahr oasis reaches into the third and final stage of the Buddhist culture of the Tarim Basin. On the direct route eastward from Kucha to Turfan, Kharashahr was never so important a political power or Buddhist center as its neighbors. Nonetheless great numbers of temples and shrines were found both in the old town and on the ridges of the mountains at its side; there were also a few cave temples cut out of the hills. Most of the shrines appear to have been destroyed by fire in the tenth century, but to have existed for several hundred years before that. The ruins were particularly rich in statuary, many pieces retaining the original coat of bright paints. As well as the familiar Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, and goddesses in more or less pure Hellenistic style, there were found deities of distinctly oriental appearance and some remarkably realistic horses and camels. Many examples were provided of the variety of heads which could be produced by skillful use of a limited number of molds.

The Shorchuk wall paintings ascribed to the seventh, eighth, and ninth centuries demonstrated even more clearly than the sculpture the intermingling of eastern and western peoples and cultures. The Buddhas, monks and Gandharvas of these frescoes have consistently Far Eastern features, but each monk carries between his prayer-joined palms a long-stemmed flower reminiscent of those held by the donors of Kyzyl. The benefactresses at Shorchuk are slant-eyed, long-nosed, and rather stocky women who can be identified with considerable confidence as belonging to one of the tribes of Western Turks which held sway over Kharashahr for some centuries. The use of deep colors and the presence of stylistic details such as very cursive outlines show strong Chinese influences.

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172 532 A fine Manichaean wall painting showing a priest of Persian features, possibly Mani himself, dressed in full canonicals and followed by several ranks of white-gowned and tall-bonneted *electi* (devotees under special vows of purity and abstinence), was similarly discovered behind a single layer of bricks. Presumably temples were cleared in this way for other types of worship. Illuminated pages of Manichaean religious texts and Manichaean temple banners, also found in various places in and near Khocho, show the disciples in the same costumes. Both men and women (*electi* and *electae*) are pictured, sometimes with hands clasped at the bosom and hidden muff-like in the robe, sometimes carrying or writing in books. In the book roll fragments and pages, the pictures and text, in a special Manichaean script, are combined to produce a total effect very similar to the early Christian codices of medieval Europe. Bright clear colors are used and the designs are kept fairly simple. Although unmistakably related to the general development of Central Asian art, the Manichaean finds actually constitute a separate and exotic growth with roots deep in third-century Sassanian Persia from which Mani himself sprang.

172 532 778 Buddhist art in Uighur times is best exemplified by the wall paintings of the vast majority of the temples at Bezeklik ("the place where there are decorations") near the village of Murtuk. Here a great phalanx of free-standing structures and rock-cut caves, some with structural antechambers, occupied a protected ledge between the river and the mountains. Hundreds of separate temples were still preserved in various stages of disrepair at the beginning of the present century.

A splendidly preserved set of murals was discovered in the temple which Le Coq numbered 9. Separate panels depicted groups of Indian monks in yellow with their individual names supplied in an Indian script, and Far Eastern monks in violet with both Chinese and Uighur names. All carried single long-stemmed flowers. The main pattern of decoration consisted in a series of Pranidhi or prayer scenes. Each one shows a large standing Buddha elaborately garbed and bejeweled and surrounded by an

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elongated aureole. From five to ten figures are disposed about the Buddha in vertical columns on either side. Usually the two at the base kneel and present gifts such as food, lamps, or trays of flowers. A small Chinese house in a compound frequently is found in a top corner. Some of the worshipers are highly individualized and would seem to be portraits of particular monks or in one case of secular persons who are perhaps merchants. Other monks, however, and characters identifiable as Brahmans, spear-bearers, goddesses, youthful Bodhisattvas, and so forth appear in highly schematized fashion. The facial features of the Buddhas and the stylized attendant personages approximate a single type with narrow eyes, long noses, heavy jowls, and often a hairline mustache. The monks who seem to be drawn from life, however, exhibit much more variety. Several have red hair with blue or green eyes; some show red or gray stubble on the shaven pate, cheeks, and chin. Story elements are reduced to an almost unnoticeable minimum — a tiny raft underneath the feet of the Buddha, for instance, indicates that a seagoing legend is involved. Detail, in fact, rather than composition differentiates one Pranidhi scene from another. Profusion of ornament, sureness of line, and careful symmetry all contribute to an effect of great elegance and sophistication.

Occasionally tiny figures of donors are tucked in near the feet of the Buddha in the Pranidhi scenes. Full-scale pictures of the Uighur benefactors adorn small walls near the entrance of the inner temple. Like portraits of Uighur nobles in other shrines they show strong-visaged men with small mustaches and waist-length braids of black hair. They wear tall headdresses and floor-length gowns of embroidered material. The women have an elaborate puffed coiffure topped by a sort of crown. Once again each benefactor holds a blossoming stalk. Considerable care has been taken to present these donors as individuals and the names of many are inscribed on vertical tablets near the heads.

In addition to Pranidhi scenes and portraits of donors, the Bezeklik murals and the other wall paintings in the Khocho area dating from the Uighur period (ninth through twelfth century

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172 A.D.) cover a wide array of subjects associated with the Mahayana
532 sect of Buddhism. There are representations of the particular
heavens associated with various deities, and elaborate depictions
778 of the tortures of hell. Chinese motifs appear in every context:
deities sit in the windows of Chinese-style houses; children with
Chinese-style pigtails sport on balconies. Particularly frightful
demons with flowing hair, popping eyes and several arms are also
common.

172 The end of Buddhist art in Turfan appears to have come with
532 the invasion of Jenghis Khan and the period of Mongol wars. The
Uighur kings, who held on to the area a short while longer by
submitting to Mongol suzerainty, turned with the Mongols to
Islam. But great numbers of the people remained Buddhists
right up to the fifteenth century. Many of the temples at such
places as Bezeklik and the Sangim Gorge probably continued in
use as places of worship and pilgrimage to that time.

174 Between the early murals of Miran and the latest work in the
Turfan area lie almost a thousand years. Throughout this millen-
nium a characteristic form of temple art flourished in the oasis
kingdoms and reached occasional heights of outstanding excel-
lence. This remarkable stream of creative production brings into
question previous references to the area as no more than a high-
way connecting the ancient Eastern and Western Worlds, and to
its civilization as the culture of the Silk Road. Considering the
relatively small dimensions of international trade in ancient
times, it would seem extremely unlikely that several dozen or
even several hundred camel caravans a year could have supplied
the economic foundations for such extensive artistic and religious
enterprise. On the other hand the region abounds in evidences of
much wider areas of cultivation supporting a much larger popula-
tion in former periods than today. This agricultural prosperity,
based on the known richness of the soil when properly irrigated,
would go much further than the commerce of the silk route to
explain not only why the Tarim Basin could afford so many mon-
asteries and temples, but why it attracted a continuous stream of
invaders.

3: Shrine G-3 (1922-1924) 1926 All Sinkiang All

778 I was puzzled in the Khotan region by the multitudes of poles with yaks' or horses' tails tied to the ends which were to be seen at every shrine stuck upright in the burial mound of the saint. Grenard explains that these *tughs*, as they are called, are no other than relics of human sacrifice. According to the Chinese chroniclers, the ancient Turks sacrificed human victims on the graves of the great and stuck their heads up on poles as a record of the fact. The Turks of the Altai, at the present day, according to Radloff, sacrifice horses in the same manner at the funeral of a chief, hanging up the skins over the grave with the head facing east. Among the Kazaks, the horse is not actually sacrificed, but its tail is cut off and it is regarded as dead; no further use is made of the animal. The practice of hanging horses' tails on poles at the Khotan shrines is obviously a further stage in the same process, all tradition of the original sacrifice having been lost.

Like the Italian peasant, the Turki is a great believer in the efficacy of local saints, and there are innumerable shrines all over the country dedicated not only to the "Imams" but to later saints and heroes. These sanctuaries almost always have some superstitious observance attached to them, connected either with the curing of diseases or with the bearing of children. At shrines where the belief is of the latter type the majority of the pilgrims are, of course, women, and the mullas have therefore been obliged in each case, for the sake of propriety, to invent a female saint, complete with legend, in order to bring the cult into line with Islam. That most of 769 these cults are nothing more or less than ancestor-worship of great antiquity is shown by the popular names of the shrines; the common people seldom refer to them by the name of any particular Mussulman saint, but pray to "Sultan Buwam" (Our Royal Ancestor or Ancestress), "Bu Anam" (Our Ancestress Mother), "Hazrat Pir" (The Holy Sage), and even "Qāra-Sakāl Atam" (My Father Blackbeard). The title "Padshah" or king is very often used *tout court*.[1]

[1] Miss Sykes and Sir P. Sykes give accounts of several interesting shrines and the superstitions attaching thereto. See "Through Deserts and Oases of Central Asia," pp. 68–72, 92–5, 205–7, 314, 320. The custom mentioned by Sir Percy on p. 314, of a woman desirous of a child putting her hand into one of the holes in the wall of the tomb, appertains to the shrine of Bu Anam on the left bank of the Tumen 4 miles above Kashgar. The rule, we were told, is that whatever her hand touches in the hole—lump of dirt, beetle, or whatever it may be—she must eat forthwith.

3: Skrine G-3 (1922-1924) 1926 All Sinkiang All

kinds of small game, and that without going off the road. Besides the seven enumerated above, we saw, either in the mountains or in the jungles of the Tarim River valley, the following: (8) Shaw's pheasant, (9) duck, including mallard pintail, gadwall, golden-eye, and red-crested pochard, (10) snipe, (11) woodcock, (12) geese, (13) plover, (14) Tibetan snow-cock. Of these I shot specimens of all except woodcock and Tibetan snow-cock. The former we saw at Maralbashi flying through a garden; the latter I came across in large numbers at 11,000–12,000 feet while stalking ibex up the Yangi Art Jilgha.

Of many pictures that live in our memory of that delightful march, perhaps the most vivid is of the shrine of Qara-sakal Atam, "My Father Blackbeard." It is situated in the loveliest little glen imaginable. A limpid stream plashes down through open meadows from the fir-clad ridges of the Central Tien Shan, until it joins the main valley through a narrow neck between two backbones of reddish rock. Just above this neck is a coppice of fine old mountain ashes and desert poplars enclosing a glade of smooth turf and a bubbling spring. Barberry bushes, now a mass of carmine berries, and the brilliant orange-yellow of the trees in their autumn finery blend perfectly with the rich russets and ochres of the surrounding rocks; looking northwards, the grassy steppe sweeps right up to the distant forest above which again tower the snow-clad Mountains of Heaven. Father Blackbeard's shrine is only a bunch of sticks, festooned with votive rags and embellished with the horns of wild sheep; but whoever he was and whenever he lived, he is marked as having been a saint of taste—for did he not choose the most beautiful spot in all the Tien Shan to be his hermitage?

Two long but easy marches down the open and partially-cultivated valley of the Muzart River brought us to the small town of Bai on the Aqsu-Kucha road. Here we found the Mir Munshi awaiting us; he had come out from Kashgar to help me with my work at Bai and Aqsu. We stayed four days at the roomy Chinese rest-house at Bai, most of which I spent interviewing various British subjects from Kucha, three marches further on. The town, which is the headquarters of a third-class Magistrate, is an undistinguished Sleepy Hollow of a place, populated by Turkis and Chinese Muhammadan Tungans in the proportion of about three to one. It was our first experience of the latter race *en masse*, and we were

3: Skrine G-3 (1922-1924) 1926 All Sinkiang All

of Gold" which form the northern rim of the Tibetan plateau. Our first objective was the hill-village of Polu, three short marches south of Keriya; thence we proposed to visit the oases along the foot of the Qaranghu Tagh or Mountains of Darkness, that wildest and most inaccessible central section of the Kunlun which rises in the great massif of K 5 to a height of 23,890 feet. The trip proved somewhat disappointing, for the hateful dust-haze persisted and we saw little along the road beyond our immediate surroundings. Only once, for a short hour or two, did the veil lift. Nevertheless the journey was interesting in the extreme and on the whole enjoyable. Very few explorers had visited this secluded bay beneath the northern ramparts of Tibet, and the region may certainly be classed among the remotest and least-known inhabited corners of High Asia, outside Tibet itself.

The village of Boghaz Langar, at which the last of the above extracts was written, is the southernmost village of the main oasis of Keriya and lies at a height of 5,150 feet above the sea, or 700 feet higher than the town. Close by we visited the famous shrines of Imam Ghazz 'Ali, one of the heroes of local Muhammadan tradition, and of a lady known as Bu Hanifa. The place is remarkable for its plane-trees of immense age and bulk, veritable mountains of ancient wood, gnarled and monstrous like boulders in a torrent-bed. Next day we marched up the left bank of the Keriya River, passing one or two small isolated oases, and camped at a point 6,500 feet above the sea where the stream cuts through the foothills in an almost straight canyon 300 or 400 feet deep. It was a curious camp; though our tents were pitched fifty yards from the edge, the river could be neither seen nor heard and we seemed to be in the middle of a bare rolling moor of sand and scrub. Every drop of water for man and beast had to be brought by hand in buckets and gourds up a terrifying cliff-track known only to the guides we had brought with us. Next morning the haze was thicker than ever and we could see nothing of the massifs of the Altun Tagh, 21,000 feet high, which we knew impended over us at a distance of scarcely 25 miles. For hours we toiled up sandy tracks, new reaches and abysses of the river-gorge coming dimly into view at each corner. I was impressed by the quantities of drift-sand everywhere; even at this height the whole hill-side seemed to be silted up with sand blown from the distant Takla Makan, in marked contrast with the approaches to the Kashgar Range which we

3: Skrine G-3 (1922-1924) 1926 All Sinkiang All

He gave me a graphic description of how poor Qasim fell off the path on the way up to the pass and was dashed to pieces. He agreed with me that it was a little thoughtless of Qasim, on the edge of the path with a 100-foot drop behind him, to tighten a knot in a home-made rope by hauling at it with one foot pressed against the pony's side.

They offered us the pick of their houses, but we preferred to camp on a sheltered field under a low bluff of loess above the village. If only the air had cleared for an hour, the glorious snows which we could sometimes just descry far above our heads would have completed an unforgettable picture; but the haze was inexorable. In front of us the Tereklik (" poplar-y ") side-glen sloped steeply up; perched on a crag above it was a conspicuous shrine which I visited one day. Besides the usual sacrificial yak's tails and pieces of clothing I found a curious and very old votive sign of wrought copper shaped like a hand-mirror with a fine pierced-work inscription. It reminded me of an object of similar shape and size, only with a chased design and inscription, which I saw at the shrine of Mir Umar at Sangun, under the Kuh-i-Taftan in the Sarhad district of Persian Baluchistan. How I coveted that votive sign! I would have paid quite a large sum for it; but it has never seemed to me quite " playing the game " to tempt unsophisticated people to part with things which they hold sacred.

Four days we waited at Polu for the weather to clear, and then, on 24th April, we gave it up and started for Khotan. Marching three miles up the Tibet trail we struck westward at the village of Hong across the Chirikōldi (" The soldier died ") pass and the wide grassy tableland of Chata Qir. The morning had been a little less hazy than usual, but by three o'clock as we descended into the valley of Zinjik Aral a violent storm of wind laden with dust and gravel and a spatter of rain swept down upon us from the Kunlun. Followed two unpleasant hours during which we hurried half-blindly down wild moorland paths. Only one incident do I remember; under the lee of a steep hillside above us we saw three huge black eagles squatting on the rocks, gorged doubtless after some grim feast. D. put them up; fine birds they were, with dark grey ruffs, light brown heads with black round the eyes and black beaks. In this country as in the Tien Shan they tame these black eagles and hunt gazelle with them. In the evening the wind was still blowing strong when, after ten hours' hard

17 I [at Polu -- Analyst]

/The New Uighurs/

563 songs of poverty and exile, and popular songs of various kinds.
[533] The New Uighurs are great believers in the efficacy of local
[796] saints, and there are innumerable shrines all over their region
[798] dedicated to saints and heroes.

2. Patterns of living

563 a. Dwelling

342 Most of the people live in small hud houses called öy, or
[184] sometimes hānä, which resemble the simple earth, stone and reed-mat homes of the poor farmers of North China. Rich people live in well-built houses with courtyards and gardens.

The typical design of the house is a flat roof upon which small openings are left to serve as windows. The windowframes are equipped with folding shutters, and are closed at night dur-
[354] ing the winter. The window openings are so small they admit little light, and the interior is always in semi-darkness. Floor
[352] and walls are packed with reed mats and earth. The rear of the room is set apart by a partition of squared beams, and has a raised floor. This elevated section, its floor covered with reed mats and thick felt, serves as the bed and also the dining table. Most of the family's time at home is spent on this elevation. The door of the house is so low that one must bend down to pass through it. Almost every room has a chimney.

[251] The flat-topped roof of the house is used for drying grain and other agricultural products. Each house also has a veranda on
[352] which plank beds are constructed for use during the summer. Couches of wood or clay under the trees also serve as sleeping accommodations during hot weather. A house with a courtyard
[351] is surrounded by a wall of earth. In the southern area, the gar-
[184] dens of the homes are surrounded by hedges.

b. Food

563 Wheat and corn are the staple foods of the people. Rice is a
262 luxury used only for entertaining and festival occasions. Meat is preferred to vegetables, and mutton to beef. Chickens, ducks and other fowl are eaten, but not considered especially desirable. The famous Turfan raisins and Hami (Qomul) melons supply large quantities of fresh fruits for these people. Mare's milk
[272] is drunk extensively, and the noble drink called kumis, horse
[273] milk wine, is considered the most healthful of all sour milk concoctions.

563 For entertaining, camel and horse meat, beef and mutton are
262 served with fresh fruits, crystalized sugar and kumis. Meats
252 may be boiled or roasted. The most common dishes are grilled mutton and kidney, and cold boiled mutton and liver with bread. The favorite dish, called pilav, is made of the fattest mutton or beef cut into small pieces and cooked with rice, chopped carrot, onion, garlic and seedless raisins, cooked in a large cauldron.
[264] Liquid foods are eaten with wooden spoons. Other foods, including thick porridge and pilav, are eaten with the fingers.

/The New Uighurs/

563 576 mutual courtesy. In addressing one another they use the polite form of you. The same politeness is demonstrated between wife and husband. Parents use the equivalent of "thou" to address their children, servants or workers. Upon meeting a friend or entering a friend's house they say "As-salam Alaikum," and the reply is "Alaikum as-salam." They inquire about the health of the family, then bow and shake hands. Only women kiss when they meet, and only if they are related. When they part they say "Khosh," or "Allah Akbar," meaning, "The Lord is great."

563 576 574 264 [782] The more religious women pray before eating or starting to do something. Washing the hands before and after meals is mandatory. Bowls of water and towels are provided at a feast or banquet table, and hands are washed between courses. When a hostess serves refreshments to a guest, the guest rises, bows and says "Ishqallah," meaning thank you. Polite speeches are made by both host and guest on the guest's arrival and departure. Good manners are regarded as important.

4. Superstitions and taboos

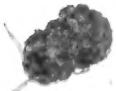
563 771 [776] [778] [769] The New Uighurs attach superstition to almost everything. They believe in witches, ghosts, charms and talismans. As mentioned before, they believe in the powers of local saints and heroes, to whom they have dedicated innumerable shrines, and certain superstitions connect these shrines with the curing of disease and the bearing of children. Ancestor worship is also strong among them, as shown by the popular names of the shrines.

[756] [755] [789] 563 771 775 [782] [825] The people are also firm believers in witch-doctors, and in magic powers that cure disease, induce love, or sow enmity between people. Ghosts are much feared, especially the ghost of a Chinese. People regard the Urumchi Road from Kashgar as a haunt for Chinese ghosts. They believe that if one is haunted he may be able to propitiate the ghosts by leaving money on his doorstep overnight. If the money is gone in the morning, the ghosts have taken it and will make no further trouble. They also have a superstitious dread of snakes, and believe that if one kills a snake, its mate will haunt him.

563 372 [777] 563 821 The New Uighurs try to maintain an everlasting fire in their fireplaces, to bring prosperity to the house. Ashes from the fireplace are carried out at night or before sunrise, for to clean the fireplace and take out the ashes during the day may bring misfortune to the household. They fear thunder, and during a thunderstorm they pray for deliverance from threatening danger.

5. Religious celebrations and festivals

563 796 Like the festivals of Moslems the world over, the festivals of the New Uighurs are deeply colored with religious influence. Besides Fridays, which are generally celebrated, the people have only three main holidays, Rōse-hāyt, Kurban-hāyt and



/Turkic Moslems of Sinkiang/

character of Islam. In Sinkiang, Islam has been affected by two major factors. The first one is that Islam has been superimposed over a civilization which contained Shamanist, Buddhist, Manichaeanist and Nestorian elements. Many Buddhist traditions have not been erased completely by Islamic beliefs. These traditions have been incorporated into Islam, although totally foreign to it, and they have acquired a superficial Moslem character.

The second fact that had considerable influence upon the development of Islam in Sinkiang is that the country is under Chinese administration. As already explained, Islam is not merely a religious faith, but it encompasses many aspects of the entire way of life of the Moslems. As a result of Chinese administration, all those functions of Islam that are not concerned with the articles of faith and strictly religious rites, have been taken over by the Chinese. The law of the country is the Chinese secular law, and not the Moslem religious one. The courts of law are administered by Chinese civil servants rather than by the Moslem Qazis (judges).

The Turkic Moslems in Sinkiang are not very strict in their observance of religious practices. There is only a small number of people (mainly Kirghiz) who perform the ablutions and say the prayers regularly, pay the Zakat to the mosque, medresses (mosque schools) and the poor, wear a turban and abstain from smoking and drinking. The majority of the people (this applies to the East Turki as a whole) do not perform the ablutions nor prayers. Except on holidays there are very few people in the mosque during the services. The people do not give the required Zakat, and they smoke tobacco and even opium. Though they are quite strict about not eating pork, they do not abstain from drinking wine and other alcoholic beverages. Few of the women veil themselves in public, and they go unsupervised in the market places. The Sunni Turki in Sinkiang have no scruples about letting their daughters marry the Balti Shi'is (most other Sunni Moslems consider it a great offense). The people as a whole are very poorly instructed in the matters of religion. Most know the fatihat sura (the opening chapter of the Koran), but few know more. Holidays are more strictly observed than are other rites. Though Ramadan imposes rigid restrictions during the daytime, at night the Moslems of Sinkiang compensate festively for their daily sacrifices. Id-el-Fitr, the Moslem New Year celebration in the tenth month, is one of the most joyful and colorful holidays in Sinkiang. The people attire themselves in new clothes, attend the special services in the mosques, greet each other, visit friends and attend feasts.

As Grenard points out, the cult of Imams and other Moslem saints which is an integral part of Islam in Sinkiang, goes back

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795 to religions other and older than Islam. The Moslem priests,
796 powerless to destroy the popular worship of certain shrines,
798 adopted those shrines and named them after Islamic personages.

The Turki is a great believer in the efficacy of local saints, and there are innumerable shrines all over the country dedicated not only to the "imams," but to later saints and heroes. These sanctuaries usually have some beliefs and observances attached to them, connected either with the curing of diseases or with the bearing of children. At shrines of the latter type, the majority of pilgrims are women. The mullas have therefore been obliged, for the sake of propriety, in each case to invent a female saint, complete with legend, to bring the cult in line with Islam. The [178] popular names of the shrines reveal that most of these cults [769] have been derived from the ancient practices of ancestor worship.

791 Paganism, as well as ancestor worship, is still prevalent in
796 this land despite a thousand years of Islam. Many of the religious festivals, especially those which are seasonal and therefore not connected with the Moslem calendar, are more pagan than Moslem. They are merely popular gatherings for the purpose of feasting and enjoyment, and are probably older than Islam.

793 The clergy in Sinkiang is divided into two categories: the
794 judges and the priests in one, and the simple clerks in the other (the mullas). The latter class includes all males who can read and write and wear a turban. Above these mullas, there is a class of mosque officials with specific functions: the Muazzin, who calls the believers to attend the daily prayers, the Imam, who leads the services, the Mutakib, in charge of seeing that the laws of the Koran are observed, the Reis, prefect of discipline, the Khatib, who delivers the Friday sermon, and the mulla a'lam, doctor of law who is also in charge of the circumcision ceremony.

793 The resources of the clergy consisted mostly of waqf, land
[423] property which had been donated to them or confiscated by them. In spite of the Chinese confiscations of clergy landed property, until recent times this constituted an important source of income for the clergy. Other clergy sources are the Zakat, donations from richer believers, casual fees, judicial fees, and fees paid for marriages, funerals and so forth. The Zakat is not a very substantial source of income, as the Sinkiang Moslems are lax in adhering to this obligation. At present it is almost impossible for the clergy to subsist without resorting to some secular occupation.

793 The judicial power and the police functions of the clergy in
692 the past have diminished greatly during the Chinese administra-
[177] tion. The Qazis judge cases which are brought voluntarily to

3:Cable & French M-5 (1926) 1927 AF13 Northwest China AF13
Sinkiang AI 1

when we asked for protection from the dangers of the road, as they recognised instinctively that: 'Happy is the people whose God is Jehovah.'

It was great joy at one small oasis[1] to be greeted by an old friend, a man who had registered his name in Ansi as an enquirer. He had been appointed as inspector of the poles which carry the single telegraph wire across this part of the desert, the gales so constantly uprooting them that the whole route is divided into sections, each of which is placed in the charge of a responsible man whose business it is to keep them in repair. At a further stage of the journey where the work was not so well arranged, we often found the poles lying flat, our mules' feet being in danger from the entangled coils upon the ground. The line of the trade-route is indicated by this single telegraph wire, which often seems to the despairing traveller the only assurance he has of human things not seen—men, families, cities, and the normal objects of life.

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE RAVINE OF BABOONS

At Iris Well we were only thirty long miles from Hsinghsinghsia, the military frontier station of Turkestan. We were anxious to arrive by daylight as we had reason to anticipate delay, and we hoped that twenty-four hours would be sufficient for transacting all business relating to passports and permits; it was a great relief, therefore, to see the clouds gathering, which meant the promise of a cool day. Taking advantage of this we hurried up all our preparations, and left in good time. At midday we reached the frontier proper—a waterless

[1] [Near Malienking -- Analyst]

3:Cable & French M-5 (1926) 1927 AF13 Northwest China
Sinkiang AI 1

site but marked by a shrine flanked with two high poles. A stake roughly carved to suggest the form of a man was driven into the ground, and its rounded knob was thick with the oil which generations of carters have poured over it as a libation.

We hastened on, and before nightfall came in sight of the Pass, which bears the strange name of 'The Ravine of Baboons.' It was not encouraging to catch sight of a group of soldiers watching us through field-glasses from an eminence. At the entrance to the Ravine we found a military tent pitched, and the guards waiting to question us. The N.C.O. was none too well-mannered. He scoffed at the idea of our carrying so heavy a load of books, and said: 'If you tell me stories like that I'll search your baggage through!' We then produced our passports, which he scrutinised. They were important-looking documents, and evidently impressed him, perhaps the more so because he was wholly illiterate, as we discovered next day. The mere sight of them, however, had a wholesome effect upon him, for he handed them back with an apology for not being able to offer us tea in his tent. We continued our way through the narrow Pass for another two miles, and at every turn of the road soldiers appeared. When we reached the little village we were at once surrounded by a crowd of military, and an officer coming on the scene told us we could not proceed until such a time as the Governor, by telegram, should have indicated his willingness for us to do so. He directed us then to the only vacant room in the place, which was situated in an inn court so small that the carts had to stand in the road outside. The room itself was wretched beyond description. It had no door, while a hole in the wall served as window, so that we were unable for a moment to escape the inspection of the crowd of soldiers. The